A Framework to Harness Effective Partnerships for the SDGs

International Mayors Forum 2022-23
Session 9

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Background:
Charting a course for transformative action

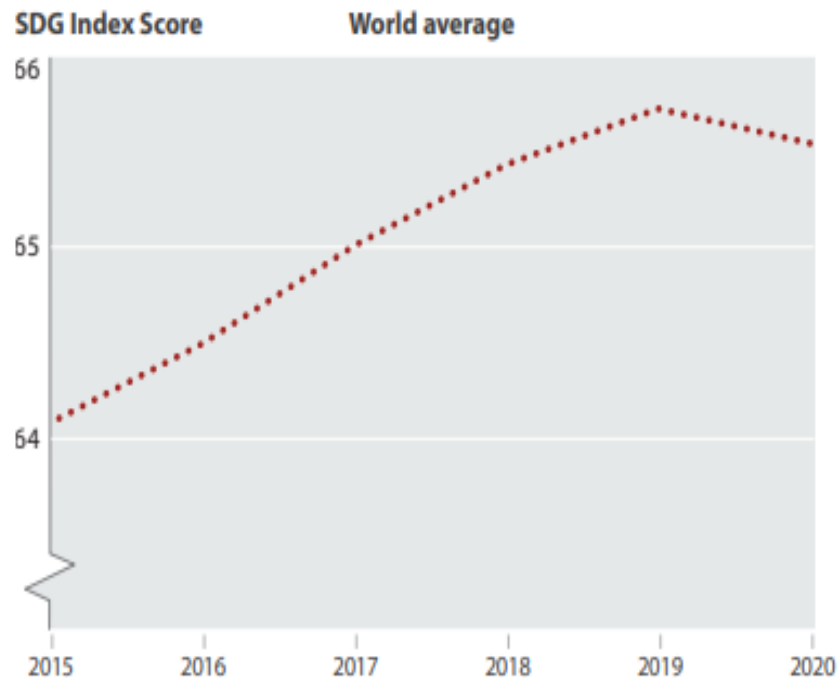# Preparatory process for the HLPF/Summit

Importance of localization and VLRs

VNRs and VLRs by year
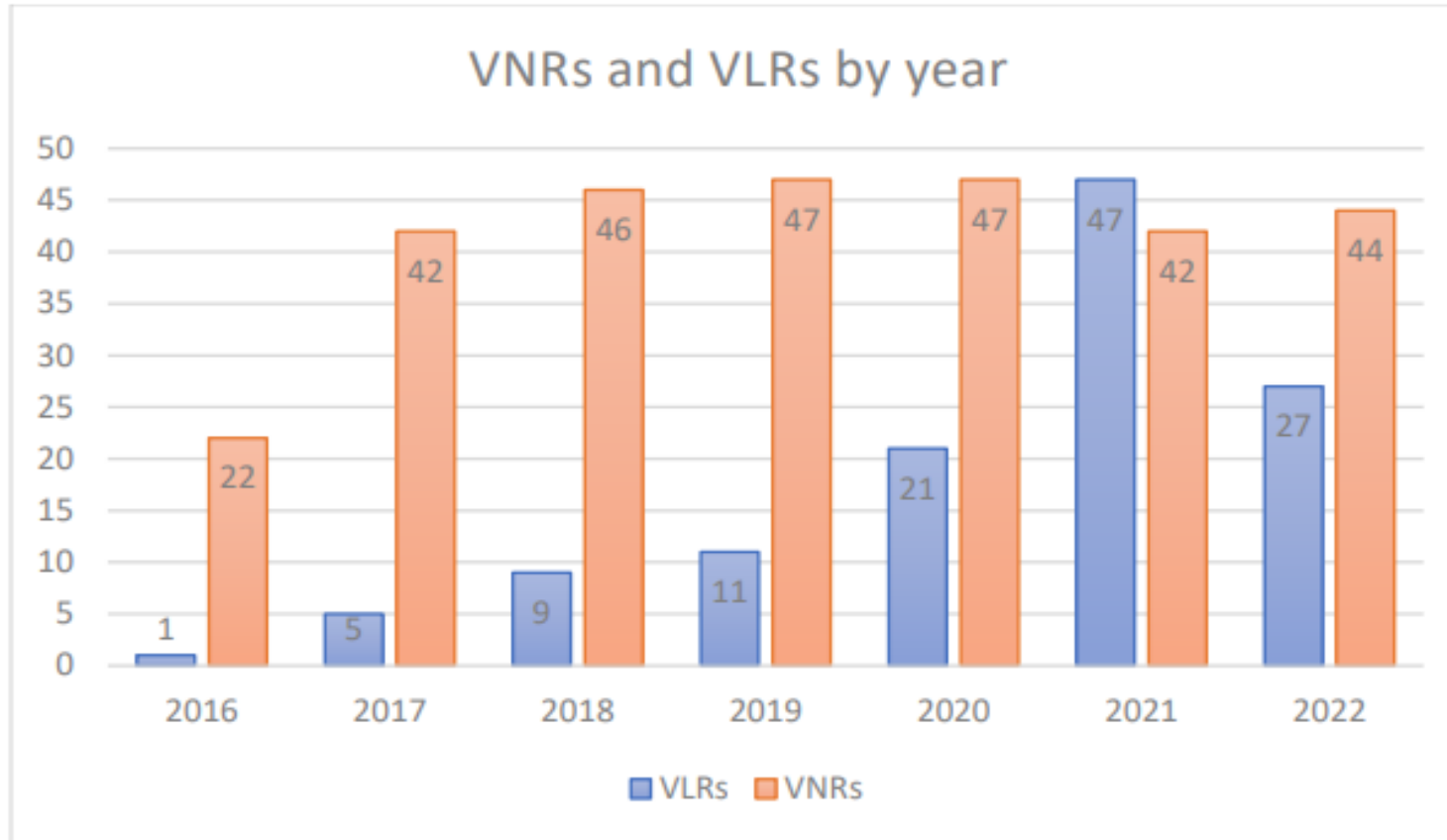
Source: UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development & the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development

Two lessons from the Covid19 pandemic

SDG17 Partnerships for the Goals

- Goal 17: "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development"

- Contains 19 targets grouped into five areas: finance, technology, capacity building, trade, and systemic issues

- The systemic issues cover topics such as policy and institutional coherence, data and statistical capacities, and partnerships.

- 25 indicators to measure progress toward targets.

Progress on SDG17?

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2022: UNSTATS.UN.ORG/SDGS/REPORT/2022/
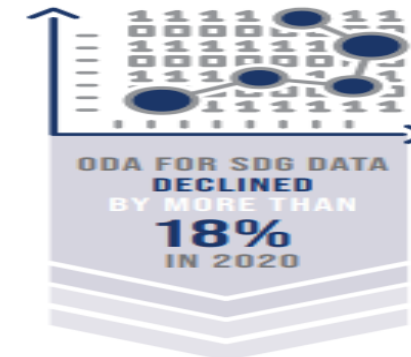
Understanding Partnerships Role in Transformation

TABLE 1. Partnerships that supported Ireland's development (1990–2008).

Policies	Partnerships
Low corporation tax rate.	With diaspora community and business leaders in the USA.
Access to the European Single Market.	EU Membership (1973).
Investments in infrastructure and higher education institutions.	EU Regional Development Funds. Partnerships with philanthropists.
Low relative wages.	Social Partnership (1987–2008). Wage agreements between government and trade unions (O'Donnell, 2020, 2008).
Good Friday Agreement (1998).	Partnership across communities brokered by governments.

POLICY INSIGHTS

Towards a Portfolio Approach: Partnerships for Sustainable Transformations

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Abstract
This perspective article examines the role that partnerships can play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It elucidates a portfolio approach to partnerships that could align well with achieving a sustainable transformation. To conclude, it outlines recommendations on how this approach may be operationalized in research, policy, and practice. Much remains to be done on a portfolio approach. Practice and sharing of good practice should be guiding principles to facilitate peer-to-peer learning. It is also important to address power imbalances, conflicting interests, and limited representation in partnerships.

1 | SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATIONS

The COVID-19 crisis and its impact in low and middle-income countries has highlighted the importance of the UN Secretary General's call for a Decade of Action on the Sustainable Development (SDGs) centered around an inclusive multilateralism (Klingebiel & Gonsior, 2020; Sachs et al., 2021; UN, 2019a, 2021; UN SG Report, 2021). To facilitate such an approach, the UN Development Reforms have aligned the development sector with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. At the core of the reforms is the Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (SDCF) which seeks to improve coordination within the broader multilateral system and to better align multilateral efforts with National Development Plans (UN, 2019b).

To make meaningful progress on the SDGs, the SDCF will need to support sustainable transformations in a range of systems: health, education, agriculture and land-use, energy and industry, urban infrastruc-

questions remain on how cooperation frameworks such as this can best support systems transformations of this kind (Chan et al., 2021; Klingebiel & Gonsior, 2020). First, the transformations need to be designed for, adapted to regional and national contexts, and reflected in National Development Plans (Sachs et al., 2019). Ultimately, each country must choose its own path. Consequently, cooperation frameworks should seek to complement state-centered approaches to transformation. Second, no country can single-handedly deliver all the transformations. Transnational cooperation mechanisms are needed to harness resources and capabilities from diverse sources such as sustainable finance, technology and know-how, policy expertise and data, and other capacities (Akram, 2021). Third, achieving specific transformations, such as energy decarbonization, sustainable agriculture or digital transformation (Sachs et al., 2019; UN GSDR, 2019), require a broad range of responses from different sectors and levels of society, yet, societies lack many of the appropriate institutions, policies and so-

An Agenda for Partnerships for the SDGs

- What types of partnerships are needed to achieve transformations for the SDGs?

- How can these partnerships be enabled?

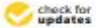- How can their effectiveness and overall coherence be ensured?

Abstract: Recent scientific reports highlight the urgent need for transformations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and long-term sustainability. This paper presents a new approach to partnerships that focuses on their role in transformations, the types of partnerships that may be needed and their enabling environment. It introduces transformation effectiveness as a criterion to evaluate a portfolio of partnerships and pathways as a tool to frame discussion of required partnerships. Guided by energy decarbonization and using a simple model of partnership formation, I highlight a (potential) mismatch between the types of partnerships required for transformation and the partnership types arising under the currently dominant voluntary approach. The model suggests the bottom-up approach can deliver some, but not all, of the partnerships needed. Five specific problems are identified—compensation for losers, partnering capacity, short-time horizons, inadequate coordination mechanisms and misaligned incentives. The paper then outlines some policy tools—transfers, regulation, public investment—governments could use to strengthen the bottom-up framework and orchestrate missing partnerships. The conclusion addresses two problems specific to the transformation approach: how to identify more systematically the partnerships needed (identification problem) and how to implement them (implementation problem); and outlines some ways to deal with these—science, deliberation, international leadership coalitions and frameworks/monitoring systems for transition partnerships.

1. Introduction

Several recent scientific reports from international agencies highlight that global development is moving dangerously along the wrong path [1–7], and it is increasingly recognized that transformations are urgently needed in a range of areas to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and long-term sustainable systems [8–13]. While many governments and societal stakeholders recognize the need for change and the importance of engaging each other in the process, there is a worrying lack of consensus in how to do this.

Much of the confusion revolves around the means of implementation (MoIs) and how to effectively

Two dimensions to effective local action

Agenda 21 – Chapter 28

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' INITIATIVES IN SUPPORT OF AGENDA 21

PROGRAMME AREA

Basis for action

28.1. Because so many of the problems and solutions being addressed by Agenda 21 have their roots in local activities, the participation and cooperation of local authorities will be a determining factor in fulfilling its objectives. Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and subnational environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to the people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilizing and responding to the public to promote sustainable development.

Activities

28.3. Each local authority should enter into a dialogue with its citizens, local organizations and private enterprises and adopt "a local Agenda 21". Through consultation and consensus-building, local authorities would learn from citizens and from local, civic, community, business and industrial organizations and acquire the information needed for formulating the best strategies. The process of consultation would increase household awareness of sustainable development issues. Local authority programmes, policies, laws and regulations to achieve Agenda 21 objectives would be assessed and modified, based on local programmes adopted. Strategies could also be used in supporting proposals for local, national, regional and international funding.

28.4. Partnerships should be fostered among relevant organs and organizations such as UNDP, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and UNEP, the World Bank, regional banks, the International Union of Local Authorities, the World Association of the Major Metropolises, Summit of Great Cities of the World, the United Towns Organization and other relevant partners, with a view to mobilizing increased international support for local authority programmes. An important goal

THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

11. We reaffirm the outcomes of all major United Nations conferences and summits which have laid a solid foundation for sustainable development and have helped to shape the new Agenda. These include the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

45. We acknowledge also the essential role of national parliaments through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets and their role in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of our commitments. Governments and public institutions will also work closely on implementation with regional and local authorities, subregional institutions, international institutions, academia, philanthropic organizations, volunteer groups and others.

Effective multi-level partnership frameworks

1. How can national/local authorities enable effective multistakeholder initiatives on the ground?

2. How can the multilateral development system improve the coherence of transnational support to national/local authorities?

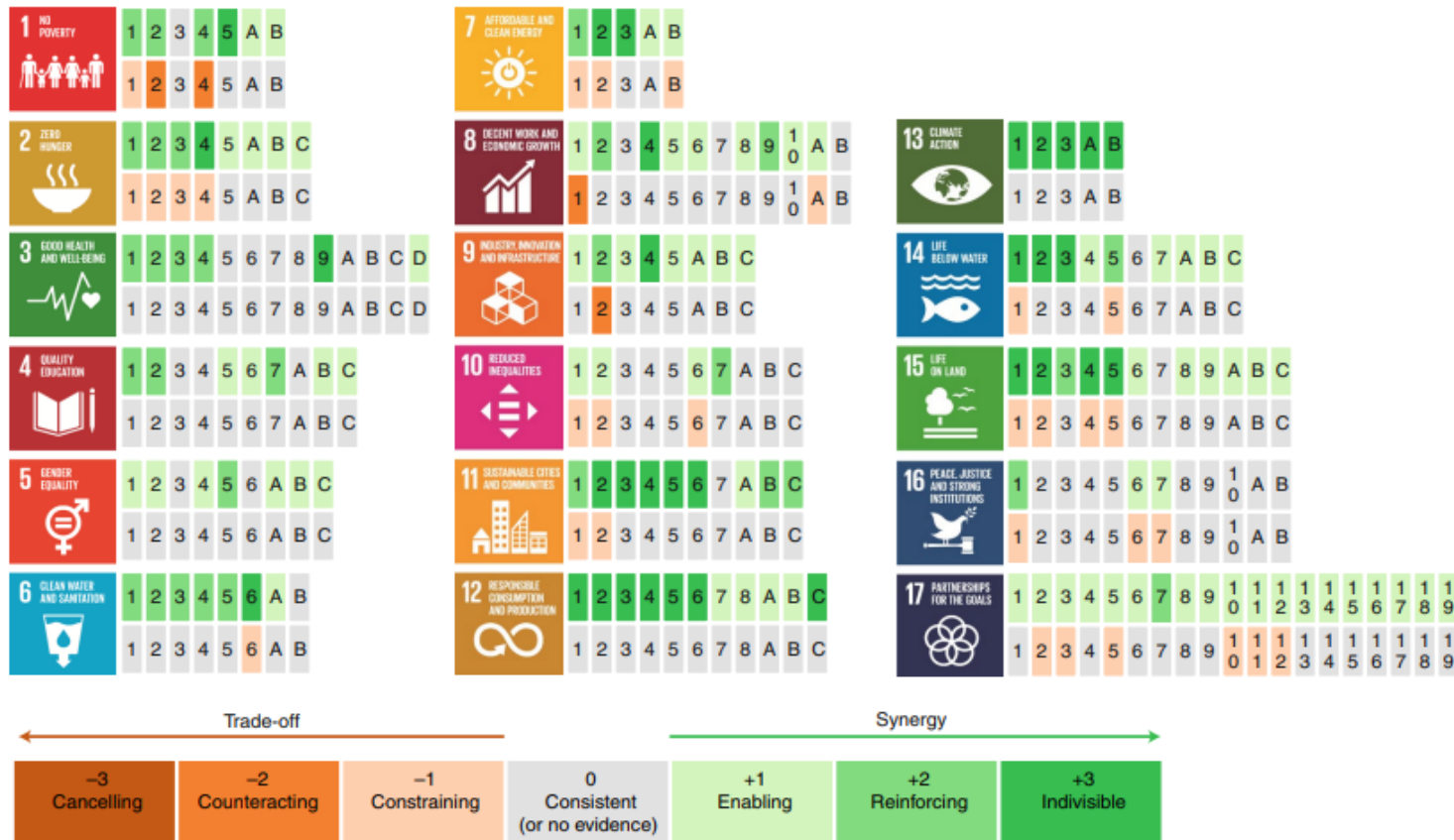# Translating linkages into effective partnerships (Weitz 2017)

Fig. 2 | Synergies and trade-offs between climate action and the SDGs. Each rectangle to the right of the relevant SDG represents a Target. The highlighting represents the strength of an interaction (the scale[4,5] is explained in detail in the Supplementary Methods). The absence of highlighting indicates the absence of identified evidence. Absence of identified evidence does not necessarily imply the absence of an interlinkage. Figure adapted from refs. [4,5], Springer Nature Ltd. Credit: United Nations.

Source: Nerini et al (2019)

Approach to implementation (Alcamo 2018)

1. Singe entry Goal

2. Main (first order) interlinkages across all of the SDGs

1 &2 align well with SDG priorities/sectoral policymaking and the principle of indivisibility

What type of partnership?

- **First step:** build a <u>multi-stakeholder coalition</u> that <u>mirrors the Goal's linkages</u> with other goals.

- **Second step**, <u>negotiate joint actions</u> to raise synergies and manage trade offs across SDGs.

A framework to harness effective partnerships for the sustainable development goals

David Horan[1]

Abstract

The sustainable development goals (SDGs) offer a broad, holistic framework of interdependent economic, social, and environmental objectives to enable integrated and collaborative approaches to their implementation. A key obstacle for operationalizing such an approach is knowing the right actors to engage on specific challenges. It is acknowledged that linkages across sectors, scales, and actors could provide an evidence base to assess and forge participation in multistakeholder partnerships for implementation. However, technical tools that could help to identify relevant actors and discussions of institutional arrangements to bring these actors on board are notably lacking in the extant literature. To support an evidence-based and systematic approach to coalition building that accounts for synergies and trade-offs across goals and targets, this paper proposes broad-based partnerships and a framework that lead actors can use to help harness collaborative SDG implementation: (1) define the partnership's scope, (2) identify the main interlinkages, (3) assign responsibilities, (4) select the best available indicators, (5) assess the challenges, and (6) forge a broad-based partnership. After describing key decisions at each step, the article discusses applications of the proposed analytic partnership-building framework to problems that warrant the approach at global, regional, and national levels covering issues such as policy coordination across line ministries, global partnerships for SDG13 implementation in SIDS, energy compacts for SDG7 implementation, and integrated multilateral responses to crises.

Keywords Sustainable development goals (SDGs) · SDG implementation · Multistakeholder partnerships · Interlinkages · Actors' responsibilities · Dashboards of indicators

SDG implementation and partnerships

The 2030 Agenda with its 17 Goals, 169 targets and 232 indicators covers a wide range of global challenges that all actors at all levels can align with up to 2030 (United Nations 2015). With just 9 years left and no country currently on track to achieve all 17 SDGs (SDSN 2020, 2021), the UN Secretary General has called for coalitions of leadership to harness more concerted action in the SDGs Decade of Action (Beisheim and Fritzsche 2021; United Nations 2019a, 2021). One important challenge for implementation, however, concerns the integrated nature of the SDGs and the need to capitalize on synergies and manage trade-offs between goals and targets to ensure efficient and equitable implementation (Alcamo 2019; Nilsson et al. 2016). In addition, substantive progress will require transformative action which means moving beyond incremental policy changes and siloed actions to cross-sectoral policy mixes, joined up actions and portfolios of coordinated interventions (United Nations 2019a, b; OECD 2019; Sachs et al. 2019; IIASA

How to build integrated partnerships?

Synthesize three types of evidence:

1. Mappings of the Goal's interlinkages with other SDGs (Nilsson 2016, Egbende 2022)

2. Stakeholder's SDG responsibilities (Zelli 2020, DCCAE 2023, 2018)

3. Assessment of challenges in interlinked policy areas, e.g., SDG dashboard (Sachs 2020, Horan 2021)

Two examples

1. Ireland: horizontal policy integration for SDG14

- Which ministries should collaborate and on what issue areas?

2. Pacific SIDS: transnational partnerships for SDG13

- Assess the coherence of these initatives and identify gaps in activities.

Example 1:
An SDG-based approach to policy coordination

Step 1

Map Linkages (to SDG14)
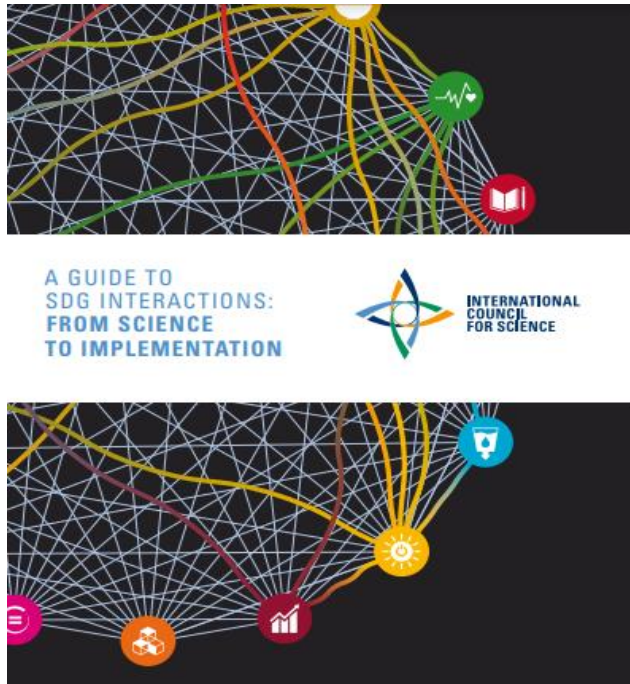
Step 2

Identify Responsibilities

Step 3

Select Indicators

Integrated SDG14 Dashboard

Dimensions	Component	Policy Area	SDG/Target	Indicator	Lead Dept. *	Target Value	Data Source
Focal SDG	SDG14	Marine	14.1	Ocean Health Index: Clean Waters (0–100)	DHPLG	100	OHI
			14.4	Fish Stocks Overexploited/Collapsed in EEZ (%)	DAFM	0	FAO/Sea Around Us
			14.5	Marine Protected Areas (% of EEZ)	DHPLG	10	UNEP
			14.7	Fisheries Revenue (US$ p. km^2 of EEZ)	DFAT	3500	Sea Around Us
	Pressures	Poverty	1	Poverty Headcount Ratio at $3.20/day (%)	DEASP	0	World Bank
		Agriculture	2	Sustainable Nitrogen Management Index	DAFM	0	EPI
		Water	5	Anthropogenic wastewater that receives treatment (%)	DHPLG	100	EPI
		Energy	7	Renewable Energy Consumption (as % of Total Energy Consumption)	DCCAE	51.7	World Bank
		Economy	8	Adjusted Growth Rate (%)	DFIN	5	SDSN
		Infrastructure	9	Logistics performance index: Quality of trade and transport-related infrastructure (1 = Low to 5 = High)	DPER	4.25	UNU-IAS
		Urbanization	11	Annual mean concentration of particulate matter of <2.5 microns of diameter (PM2.5) in urban areas ($\mu g/m^3$)	DHPLG	6.3	IHME
		Waste	12	Municipal solid waste (kg/day/per capita)	DCCAE	0.1	ILO
		Climate	13	Energy-related CO_2 emissions per capita (tCO_2/capita)	DCCAE	0	EPI
		Biodiversity	15	Imported biodiversity threats (per million population)	DCHG	0	EPI

Integrated SDG14 Dashboard (Continued)

Dimensions	Component	Policy Area	SDG/Target	Indicator	Lead Dept. *	Target Value	Data Source
Linked SDGs	Impacts	Poverty	1	Poverty Headcount Ratio at $3.20/day (%)	DEASP	0	World Bank
		Nutrition	2	Prevalence of undernourishment (% pop.)	DoH	0	WHO
			2	Prevalence of obesity BMI ≥ 30 (% of adult population)	DoH	2.8	WHO
		Health	3	Subjective well-being (10 = High to 0 = Low)	DoH	7.6	Gallup
		Gender	5	Female to male labour force participation rate (% female-to-male ratio)	DJE	100	ILO
		Economy	8	Adjusted Growth Rate (%)	DFIN	5	SDSN
			8	Unemployment Rate (%)	DBEI	0.5	ILO
		Inequality	10	Gini Coefficient for Income (0–100)	DFIN	27.5	SDSN
		Urbanization	11	Annual mean concentration of particulate matter of <2.5 microns of diameter (PM2.5) in urban areas (μg/m^3)	DHPLG	6.3	IHME
		Climate	13	People affected by climate-related disasters (per 100,000)	DCCAE	0	SDSN
		Biodiversity	15	Red List Index of species survival (0 = Worst to 1 = Best)	DCHG	1	IUCN
	Responses	Education	4	Lower Secondary Completion Rate (%)	DES	100	UNESCO
		Science & Technology	9	Number of scientific and technical journal articles (per 1000 population)	DBEI	2.2	NSF
		Biodiversity	15	Mean area protected in freshwater sites important to biodiversity (%)	DAFM	100	IUCN
		Justice	16	Corruption Perception Index (0 = Low to 100 = High)	DJE	88.6	Transparency Int.
			16	Freedom of the Press Index (0 = Best to 100 = Worst)	DPER	10	Reporters sans frontiers
			16	Seats held by women in national parliaments (%)	DPER	50	IPU
		Partnership	17	Government spending on health and education, proportion of GDP (% GDP)	DFIN	15	World Bank
			17	Population using the internet (%)	DFAT	100	ITU

Multistakeholder coalition and recommendations for integrated implementation

Departments	Marine Performance	Pressures	Impacts	Responses
DAFM	Sustainable Fisheries	Sustainable Agriculture		
DBEI			Employment	Innovation
DCCAE		Climate Mitigation		
		Renewable Energy		
		Household Waste		
DCHG		Biodiversity Threats		
DFIN				Finance
DFAT	Economic Benefits			
DoH			Nutrition: Obesity	
DHPLG	Marine Protection	Wastewater Treatment		
	Marine Pollution			
DJE			Gender Equality	Corruption
DPER		Sustainable Infrastructure		Inclusive Decision Making

Figure 3. Priorities for Integrated Marine Policymaking in Ireland

Note. Yellow = "considerable challenges", orange = "significant challenges" and red = "major challenges.

Example 2:
Transnational partnerships for SDG13 implementation

- At the international level, the brokering of partnerships is often event driven (Chan 2021; Pattberg 2012; Andonova 2003).

- Method to assess coherence of a set of transnational climate partnerships for Pacific SIDS.

- Method involved juxtaposing

1. the distribution of partnership outputs

2. the distribution of SDG13 interlinkages with other Goals

to assess gaps in partnership activities.

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DISCUSSION PAPER SERIES

The SDGs as an Integrative Framework to Assess Coherence of

Transnational Multistakeholder Partnerships for SIDS

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Transnational climate initiatives for Pacific SIDS

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Keyword search

REPORTING —
- Submitted on time
- Report due
- Two years overdue

STATUS +

#SIDSAction34524

Ensuring climate resilient water supplies in the Comoros Islands

Commitments:		Climate Action:	
Partnerships	47	Adaptation	44
Individual	2	Mitigation	2
Total	49	Both	3
Geographic Scope:		**Goals Reported:**	
Regional/subregional	25	SDG13 only	13
National/subnational	24	Multiple SDGs	36
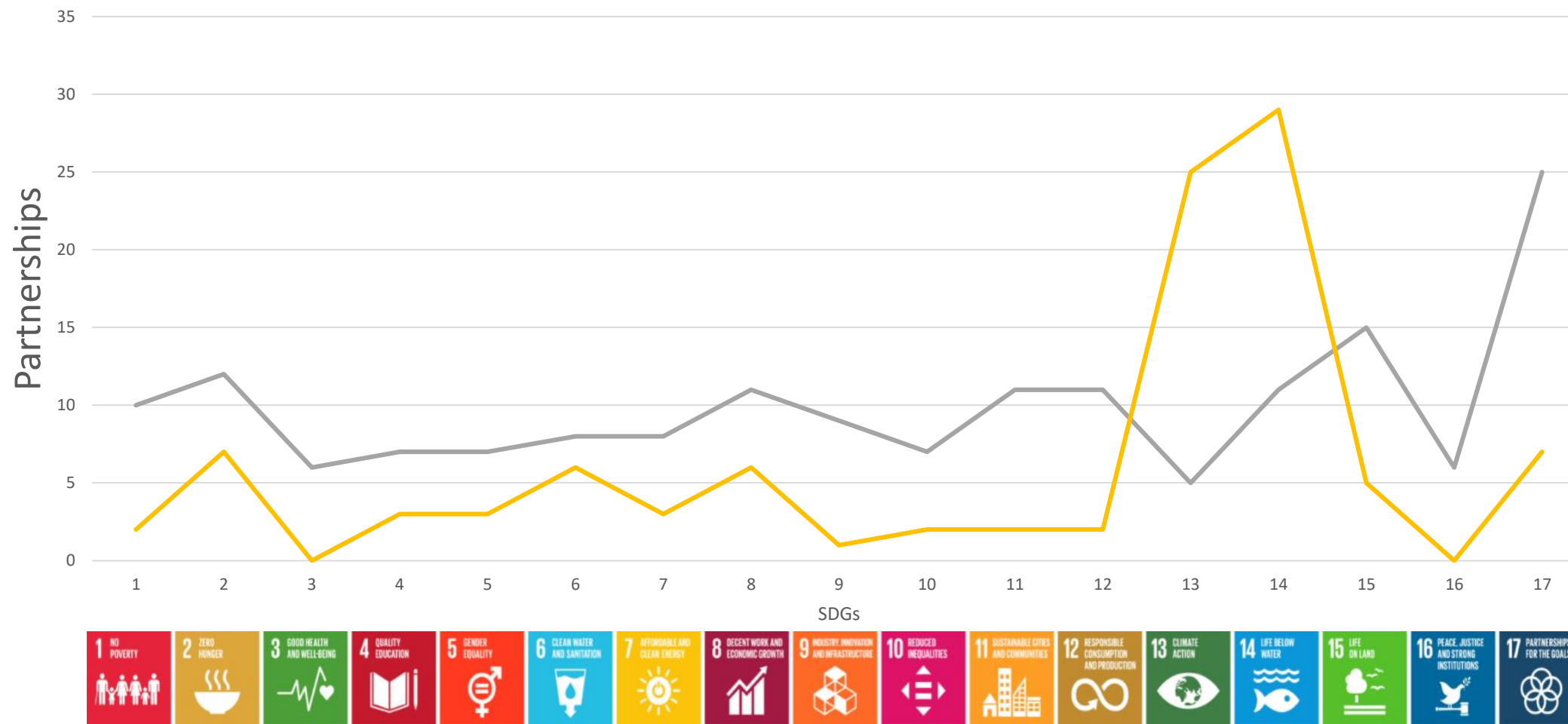
Discussion and implications for orchestration

- Ocean-climate nexus is well represented, however, few partnerships address climate-development nexuses: poverty, health, justice.

- Possible reasons: 2017 UN Oceans Conference, SIDS eligibility for development finance, low adaptation finance distributed to SIDS.

- Biggest gaps appear for climate-related development. Filling this gap could be important for addressing climate adaptation in Pacific SIDS.

Issues/Future Work

On the governance side:

1. How priorities/entry points are selected?
2. Institutionalizing/incentivizing participation, ensuring a balance of power/political economy.
3. Identifying stakeholder SDG responsibilities

On the technical side:

1. Improving the accuracy of the assessment: recent data, disaggregated data, indicator relevancy, contextual linkages
2. Feasibility/data availability
3. Measuring interactions and weighting linkages
4. Tools and participatory methods for mapping SDG linkages

Some recommendations

- Can use dashboards of indicators to identify and coordinate key stakeholders for integrated implementation.

- In settings with limited data availability, participatory approaches can be used to map linkages between SDGs and assess challenges (see Egbende 2022).

- Rather than appearing as a separate policy area, the SDGs should be used as a holistic framework to enable an integrated approaches in sectoral policy areas.

- Partnerships offer an institutional arrangement to bring together key stakeholders and negotiate joint actions that can be flexibly incorporated into different governance frameworks at national/local level.

- The multilateral system should assess the coherence of its own development initiatives and support national/local authority's efforts to build integrated partnerships/provide expertise and capacity training.

How to enable integrated approached

Countdown to the UN SDG Summit 2023 Webinar Series Webinar 5: SDGs 9 and 10 – Industry, Innovation, & Infrastructure and Reduced Inequalities

30 March 2023

This 90-minute webinar was the fifth in Stakeholder Forum's 'Countdown to the UN SDG Summit 2023' series of 8 webinars in the run-up to the September 2023 SDG Summit. A review of two SDGs each month, commencing November 2022, the series continues to explore where we are in their implementation, identifies transformative actions for change, and assesses what kind of disruptions they might create together with the benefits for those goals under review and for other goals with which there are interlinkages, with an emphasis on strengthening the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

Open access journal articles

Thank you!

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